

To Whom It May Concern:

I have written this memo to express my opposition to eliminating the 5 WPM morse code requirement from the General and Extra Class Amateur Radio License.

Amateur radio has been with us for many years and several members of our fraternity have contributed to the technical advancements in communications. Those striving to join the ranks of the worldwide community of hams have been willing to conform to the stringent but fair testing of international morse code and radio communication theory and practices. We all have expressed some opposition to established ham radio licensing practices but we all are proud of having met the challenges and passed our exams. Likewise, we all believe that which is worth having is worth working for and this sets the "ham radio op" in a very special place as compared to a typical CB op. Although there are many ex-CBers who have joined the amateur radio ranks and I am sure there are many CBers that use good, established communications practices in prusuit of their hobby. However, there exists many "wanna-be hams" that oppose established communications and ham radio licensing practices (..especially the 5 WPM Morse Code requirement) who wish to enter the hobby but desire to remain entrenched in many of their bad communication practices. In the past, the 13 WPM morse code requirement has prevented many of these individuals from crossing over into the amateur radio fraternity simply because they did not fill the obligation to passing the cw exam. Many believe that lowering the CW test to 5 wpm would greatly attract more individuals to the hobby but still keep those without any serious interest in ham radio from entering into our ham radio family. I believe the "no code" for the Tech Class requirement may have contributed some degree to an increase in the U.S.-based ham population. However, I truly think those desiring to work HF via the General and Extra Class should still be required to pass a 5 WPM morse code test.

In summary, I believe eliminating the morse code requirement from the Amateur General and Extra Class Licensing Exams is a mistake. Most hams believe that which is worth working for is worth having and feel very strongly about attracting those individuals into our hobby with similar feelings and principles. There should be provisions in the licensing procedures for a medical or handicap waiver to the morse code requirement for those legitimate applicants requiring such a waiver. All others should join the ranks of other ham radio ops and prepare to learn the morse code and to pass the five (5) wpm exam. In a long run, I believe newcomers to our hobby will sense a bit of pride knowing they contributed to keeping ham radio a special hobby and a national communication resource composed of prideful individuals who don't mind meeting and overcoming a challenge.

73,
George Murphy, K3RQ

